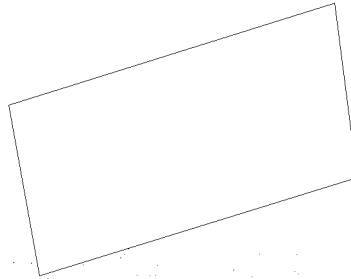




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National Intelligence Daily

***Wednesday
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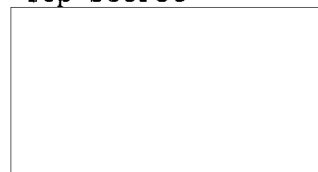
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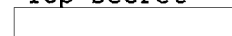


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BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

USSR: Editorial on TNF

An editorial yesterday in Pravda apparently is intended to dispel any Western misinterpretations of Moscow's new position on TNF talks and to clarify the Soviet view of an appropriate agenda.

[redacted]

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The article alleges that the difference between the proffered Western terms of negotiation and the Soviet proposal for talks is "absolutely obvious." It criticizes as a Western misconception the idea that the USSR has "reconciled itself" to NATO's decision to deploy new theater nuclear forces during talks and will "enter negotiations virtually on the terms proposed by the West." *Pravda* may be reacting to a *New York Times* article last Thursday asserting that Moscow had accepted "the Western position on the terms for starting negotiations on missiles in Europe."

[redacted]

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The editorial cites three possible paths to resolving the TNF impasse. It asserts that the "best basis for negotiations" remains President Brezhnev's proposal of last October "to reduce Soviet medium-range nuclear means"--presumably both missiles and aircraft--provided that "no American medium-range means" are added to those already in Europe. The SALT III framework would be another forum for TNF talks, but the editorial notes that delay in ratification of SALT II has made discussions on TNF in that framework impossible at present.

[redacted]

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The latest Soviet proposal asks that TNF talks involve "interconnected discussion" of NATO's planned TNF deployments and the "large numbers of American nuclear means already in Europe and near it." The editorial's detailed exposition of US "forward-based" nuclear systems in Europe parallels the view expressed by Soviet Minister of Defense Ustinov in *Pravda* last October. In *Pravda's* words, this includes: nuclear-capable tactical aircraft in Western Europe, including US F-111s based in the UK; US carrier-based aircraft; US Poseidons committed to NATO; and even US submarines committed to intercontinental missions but based close to Europe and virtually always in "battle position."

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NORWAY: Preplaced NATO Stocks

Oslo's recent descision to restudy stocking of US military equipment in Norway, now under negotiation, attempts to deflect further pressure from Moscow concerning alleged changes in the balance of forces on NATO's northern flank.

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A new committee of Norwegian military experts, the Bruland Committee, is expected to suggest that Norway be given access to NATO equipment to be stocked in Norway for use by US forces. The committee also plans to consider putting the storage sites farther from the Soviet border than now proposed.

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Such changes would respond to some points in Moscow's propaganda against the entire issue of preplaced stocks. The Soviets accuse Norway of violating its own ban against foreign bases by allowing the storage of military equipment over which the US would retain sole control. They also insist that such stocks near Norway's border with the Kola Peninsula, in particular, would pose a direct security threat to the USSR.

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Despite Norway's condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its strong support for NATO, many Norwegians, especially the ruling Labor Party's left wing, believe Oslo should give priority to reducing East-West tension, particularly regarding arms control.

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SAUDI ARABIA: No Production Cuts Planned

The Saudi Foreign Minister announced Monday that his nation intends to continue oil production at the rate of 9.5 million barrels per day through the end of the year.

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Production at current levels through the third quarter--when demand is expected to continue to be weak--would add another 100 million barrels to inventories and force other OPEC members to reduce prices or cut output. Production at current levels through the fourth quarter when consumption is on the upswing would moderate price pressures and encourage oil companies not to limit inventory drawdowns to meet seasonal demands.

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LIBERIA: Promise of Civilian Rule

Head of State Doe announced to the diplomatic corps on Monday that the ruling military council would return to barracks when it is satisfied that the country's problems have been made manageable. Doe, however, did not cite a specific time for the return to civilian rule. His statement was directed to the "friendly states wishing to assist Liberia" that had been holding back aid pending such reassurance. Doe's recent release of additional political prisoners also will improve Liberia's standing with foreign donors and with neighboring countries.

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